

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 311 200

CE 053 126

TITLE Is Oregon's Future at Risk? A Profile of Oregon's Youth...

INSTITUTION Oregon State Dept. of Human Resources, Salem.

PUB DATE Mar 89

NOTE 31p.

PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Statistical Data (110)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; Child Abuse; Delinquency; *Demography; *Disadvantaged; Dropout Prevention; Dropouts; Drug Abuse; High Risk Persons; *Poverty; Secondary Education; Statewide Planning; *Young Adults

IDENTIFIERS *Oregon

ABSTRACT

This publication focuses on the youth-at-risk problems of young people who are not successfully making the transition to adulthood in Oregon. It provides information needed by the state's educational, government, and religious leaders, as well as parents, employers, and youth. In 26 tables and graphs, the report provides information on population, demographics, family income, family composition, dual-employed parents, poverty, education, employment, health, and a variety of social issues that play a significant role in Oregon's future. Some of the statistics highlighted by the report are the following: (1) 216,000 Oregonians under the age of 22 are economically disadvantaged; (2) more than 10 percent of Oregon youth under age 18 needed mental health services in 1987; (3) 29 percent of high school students in the state drop out; (4) Oregon high school juniors use drugs more frequently than high school seniors nationally; (5) one of 13 teenagers became pregnant and one of 22 gave birth in 1987; and (6) suicide is the second leading cause of death for 15- to 24-year-olds. (KC)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

IS OREGON'S FUTURE AT RISK?

A profile of Oregon's youth...

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D.R. Steward

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

March 1989

Oregon Employment Division
Research and Statistics, LMI Unit
875 Union Street N.E., Room 207
Salem, Oregon 97311
(503) 378-8657

D. R. Steward, Asst. Administrator
for Research and Statistics

Researched and Prepared by
Jan Ciranny, LMI Resource Analyst

Typeset by Jan Ciranny and Perky Collins
Graphics by Carol Schmidt

LMI LABOR MARKET INFORMATION



TO OUR READERS:

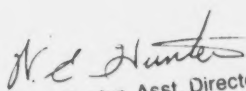
The youth-at-risk problems of not successfully making the transition to adulthood is the focus of this publication, "Is Oregon's Future at Risk? A profile of Oregon's youth." It provides valuable information to Oregon's community leaders: educators, legislators, state and local planners, elected officials, state, community and religious leaders, law enforcement, employers, parents and youth.

Information and data found in this publication will assist Oregon's decision-makers in designing and planning programs and services that will address the overwhelming needs of our youth. This comprehensive report provides information on population, demographics, family income, composition, dual-employed parents, poverty, education, employment, health and a variety of social issues that play a significant role in Oregon's future.

The Oregon Employment Division's Research and Statistics Unit is to be commended for compiling and publishing this document profiling Oregon's youth. Appreciation is also extended to the state and federal agencies that cooperated in providing valuable staff time and data. Contributors include: Adult and Family Services, University of Wisconsin's Center for Population Research & Census, Children's Services Division, Department of Education, Health Division, Juvenile Services Division, Institute for Research on Poverty, Mental Health Division, Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Traffic Safety Commission, U.S. Department of Commerce-Bureau of the Census, and U.S. Department of Labor-Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In support of the Governor's Children's Agenda, it is our hope that Oregonians will translate their concerns and the data provided here, into actions that will guarantee every child in every region of Oregon a greater chance for a decent, productive, and healthy life.

Your comments on this publication are encouraged, as are any suggestions for additional information you would find helpful.


W. E. Hunter, Asst. Director, DHR
Administrator, Employment Division

PREFACE

Oregon needs the productive energies of all its youth to ensure continued social and economic progress as we move in to the 21st century. Yet 10 to 15 percent of our 16-19 year-olds are at risk of not successfully making the transition into productive and responsible adulthood. The problems facing our youth are alarming, the issues compelling, and fresh solutions are needed.

The term "at-risk-youth" is now commonplace among researchers, policy makers and educators. The reasons these youth are at risk are many. Child abuse, poverty, inadequate educational opportunities, substance abuse, lack of meaningful work and recreation, and mental and physical health problems are all familiar indicators of the plight of many young people. And, these same problems are threatening to devastate the talent and hope of the next generations.

In Oregon, for instance,

- 216,000 Oregonians under the age of 22 are economically disadvantaged.
- Nearly 81,000 Oregonians under the age of 18 in 1987 needed mental health services; that is 11.8% of the youth population.
- Only 71 percent of the freshmen in 1983 graduated with their class four years later; this translates into a dropout rate of 29 percent.
- Oregon high school juniors are using drugs more frequently and at an earlier age than high school seniors, nationally.
- Juveniles accounted for 23.7 percent of all arrests for crimes against persons and property, and behavioral crimes.
- 64 percent of the youth who entered MacLaren School for Boys during the last six months of 1987 were assessed as being chemically dependent.
- Approximately 90 percent of the girls in the Juvenile Corrections' Hillcrest School during 1987 reported being sexually abused at some time prior to their commitment to the training school.
- One out of 13 (over 7,000) teenagers age 15-19 became pregnant, and one out of 22 gave birth in 1987.

"It is time for this generation of Oregonians to meet our challenge: to become stewards of the child. As carefully as we have used and preserved, as passionately as we have cared about our forests, so must we husband and harvest the growth of talent and hope that lies within the next generations."

Governor Neil Goldschmidt

-
- 900 (21%) of the teens giving birth in 1987 already had children.
 - Suicide is the second leading cause of death for 15-to-24 year-olds.
 - During a six month period in 1988, there were 364 reported suicide attempts in children and adolescents, an average of two per day.

Although any one of these indicators is cause for alarm, the fact that many youth fall into multiple categories is even more troubling.

You are encouraged to use this resource publication to determine what needs to be done to make Oregon the best place for children to grow, learn and thrive.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Population Demographics	3
Family Structure, Income and Poverty	7
Education	11
Employment	17
Social Issues	21
Conclusion	27

Tables

Youth Population by Race, Oregon, 1988	6
Youth Population Estimates by County and Age, 1988	6
Median Family Income, United States, 1987	9
Education Completion Rates, Oregon and United States, Selected Years	11
Oregon Public School Enrollment by Race, Selected Years	13
U.S. Median Annual Income of Year-Round, Full-time Workers 25 Years and Over, 1987 ..	14
FTE Enrollment in Oregon Colleges and Universities, 1986-90	15
Degrees Awarded to Minorities, 1986	16
Oregon Youth Civilian Labor Force, Selected Years	17
Youth Unemployment Rates in Oregon, 1987	18
Oregon Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment, Selected Years	19
Oregon's Shifting Occupational Structure, 1979 & 1986	19
Monthly Drug Use Reported by Students, Oregon and United States	21
Selected Crime Statistics for Juveniles, Oregon, 1987	22
Incidents of Child Abuse by Type of Abuse, 1981-87	23
Principal Causes of Death for People Age 15-24, Oregon, 1987	24

Graphs

Oregon Youth Population, 1960-2000	3
Oregon Population Projections by Age Groups	4
Components of Population Change, Oregon, 1977-88	5
Median Income for 4-Person Family, Oregon, 1974-86	9
Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level, United States, 1970-87	10
Median Years of School Completed, Oregon and United States, 1940-87	12
Oregon High School Graduates, 1980-2002	12
Oregon SAT Scores, 1972-88	14
Unemployment Rates by Educational Level, United States, 1970-87	18
Teenage Pregnancy in Oregon, 1974-87	22

IN OPENING

Youth are growing up in a rapidly changing social and economic climate. For many, their future worklife is at risk. Education, income, family structure, population demographics, job preparedness, and lifestyle have all been found to determine in part one's worklife. The data on these topics are intended to be useful to a wide range of people, including youth, parents, educators, state and community leaders, and employers.

Young people need to be realistic when embarking upon a career. They need to know what level of education and training is necessary in order to be competitive in the labor market. They need to know which occupations offer the most opportunities and which occupations are no longer in demand. They need to know which industries are experiencing growth and which are declining. Even though a young person is likely to have three career and five job changes in a life time of work, the first experiences in the labor market can be very crucial in determining later success.

Currently, the employment level in Oregon is the highest ever recorded, accompanied by a very low unemployment rate. Employers are feeling the effects of a labor shortage. There simply are not enough young entry level workers to replace the aging baby boom generation in the labor force. The youth population in Oregon is 68,000 less than it was just eight years ago, so employers have a smaller pool of applicants from which to select. Many of the applicants that they see are simply not qualified because of a mismatch of skills.

The labor shortage creates increased job opportunities for those groups of people that in the past were not as active in the labor market, namely women, minorities and young people. The opportunity exists to move at-risk youth into the mainstream economy. However, even in the midst of a labor shortage, employment cannot be guaranteed to all. A person who is illiterate or lacks basic skills, or one who has a poor attitude towards work will have little success in the workforce.

Youth are frequently portrayed as social problems by the media. Unfortunately, part of that reputation has been deserved; the rest is based on exaggerated facts. The reality is that today's young people are tomorrow's workforce. Are they prepared to enter a competitive labor market? Are they being properly educated and counseled? Are they receiving the social services they need? The goal of Oregonians concerned about their future should be to guarantee that every young person is provided the necessary social climate so that they are a valuable economic resource, not a social problem.

POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

The changing demographics are foretelling a sellers' market; labor force entrants will be in high demand as the population ages. Oregon is already experiencing a labor shortage as employers are finding it difficult to fill entry level positions.

The baby boom generation is of prime working age, and as they move up the career ladder, they create a great number of openings at the entry level. This trend, coupled with the declining number of young people means increased opportunities for young workers. The youth today and those in the future will not have as many young competitors to contend with as did the baby boomers. However, these factors do not guarantee employment for anyone seeking work. Employers will be searching only for those workers that are literate, skilled, competent and responsible. If applicants are not qualified, employers will find ways to carry out business without local labor, either by importing labor or by increasing automation.

Oregon's Population Grows Slowly

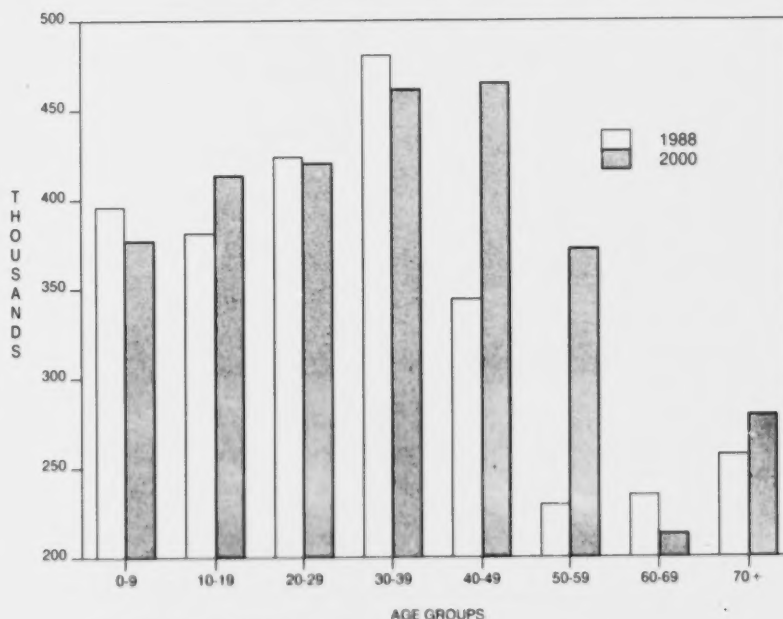
Oregon's population in 1988 is estimated to be 2,741,000. Population growth in this decade has slowed considerably compared to the tremendous growth experienced during the 1970s. During the strong economic expansion of the 1970s, population increased an astonishing 26.5 percent. But population growth in the 1980s nearly came to a screeching halt due to the recession. A low level of in-migration is the major reason that population has increased only 4.1 percent in this decade.

Population projections for Oregon vary depending upon the source, but any way it's looked at, Oregon is headed for a restructuring of the workforce based on projected declines in the number of young entry level workers.

Youth Population Shrinks

The youth population (age 15-24) in 1988 was over 396,000, a 15 percent decline from the number in 1980. Further declines are being projected

OREGON POPULATION PROJECTIONS

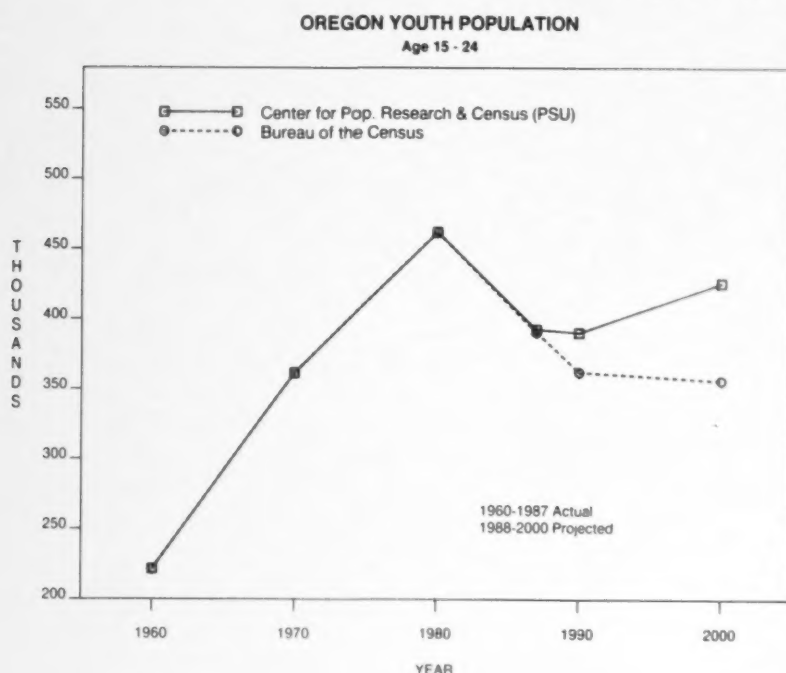


Source: Center for Population Research and Census, PSU

by the Bureau of the Census. However, the Center for Population Research and Census (CPRC) projects a slight increase for this age group

by the year 2000. The CPRC expects stronger population growth overall than does the Bureau of the Census, with high levels of in-migration leading the growth.

While the youth population has been decreasing, total population has actually been growing. This has caused the relative size of the youth population to fall greatly, increasing the magnitude of the entry level worker shortage problem. Just eight years ago in 1980, people age 15-24 accounted for 17.6 percent of the total population. Today they make up 14.5 percent and are estimated to be only 14.3 percent of the total population in the year 2000. Projections by CRPC to the year 2000 show the youth population growing only 8.2 percent in number, compared to the adult population that is expected to increase by 15.2 percent.



Population Change Has Two Components

Two factors control the direction and magnitude of population changes: natural increase and net migration. The graph depicting changes in Oregon's population indicates the relative importance of the two factors. Since net migration is quite volatile relative to natural increase, it is the primary factor in population dynamics.

Natural Increase Gradually Heading Downhill

Natural increase is the difference between the number of births and deaths. In 1987, births outnumbered deaths by nearly 14,500. Population growth due to natural increase typically ranges from 10,000 to 20,000 per year, and is influenced by a multitude of social, economic and demographic factors.

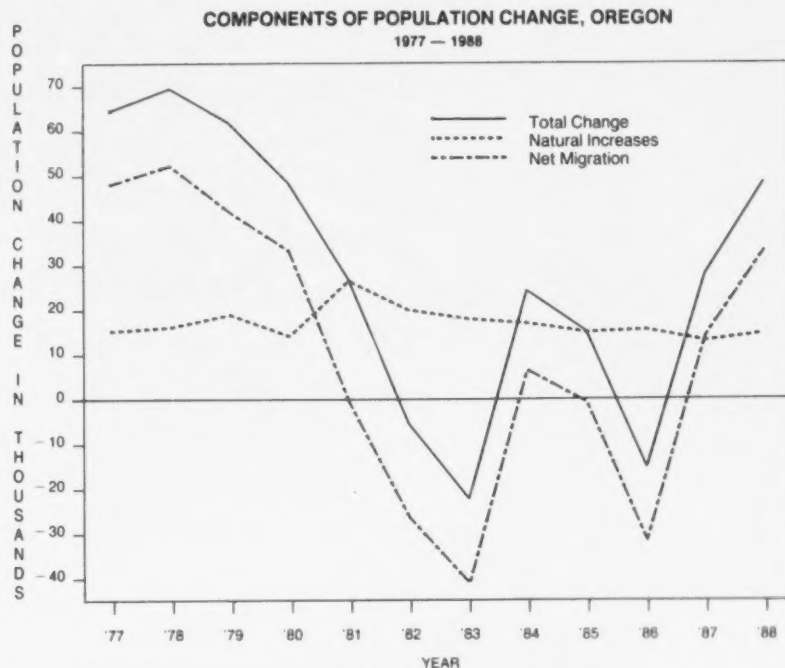
The birth rate (number of births per 1000 population) peaked at 25.4 in 1947, two years after the end of World War II. Since that time, the birth rate hit its lowest in 1973 at 13.9. The death rate has varied little since 1946, ranging from 8.1 to 9.7.

The fertility rate provides a more accurate picture of family-size preference since it is the number of births per 1000 women of childbearing age (15-44). Therefore, the fertility rate is not as greatly influenced by total population figures. The fertility rate was highest in the late 1950s, not surprising since it was the height of the baby boom period. The lowest rate on record was 61 in 1987, indicating today's preference for small families. A national study reported that 72 percent of women age 18-34 expected to have no more than two children, if any at all.

Net Migration Returns to Positive Level

Natural increase explains only half of the dynamics behind population growth; the other half is net migration. Migration patterns are strongly correlated with business cycles in the economy, making them the most volatile factor affecting population growth. Within the past ten years, annual net migration has peaked at 50,000 and bottomed out at -40,000. This magnitude of fluctuation dwarfs the range of natural increase changes.

From 1980 to 1985, net migration was -73,100; in other words, people leaving Oregon outnumbered those moving in by 73,100. With little prospect of obtaining employment, unusually low levels of in-migration occurred. To compound the problem, Oregonians forced into unemployment moved out of the state in search of better opportunities. But it was the lack of in-migration that primarily caused the negative net migration. In 1988, the trend was quite the opposite; net migration was nearly 36,000.



To counterbalance to some degree the out-migration of young people, Oregon has done well in attracting retirement-age people. Oregon's climate and housing market are just two factors that are appealing to retired persons. Between 1980 and 1988, the number of people age 65 and over increased 24 percent, compared to just 1.6 percent for the remaining population. Oregon shows its age when it is compared to all states. The median age of Oregon's population is 32.9 years; only eight states have a higher median age.

Minority Population Growing Faster

Oregon's minority population in 1988 is estimated to be 200,000, 7.4 percent of the total population. Eight years ago the figure was 6.6 percent. The minority population in Oregon is expected to continue growing at a faster rate than the white population and by the year 2000, minorities will represent 10 percent of the total population in Oregon.

The United States has a much higher percentage of minorities than Oregon. In 1980, the United States population was 20.4 percent minority, twice the percentage projected for Oregon in the year 2000. Minority population growth rates for the United States have been and will almost certainly continue to grow at a faster rate than Oregon's.

Greater Portion Of Youth Are Minority

Minority youth age 14-21 in Oregon number 27,570. They represent 9.2 percent of the youth population whereas all minorities account for just 7.4

percent of the general population. On average, the minority population is younger than the white population. This can be explained by the fact that minorities have larger families on average, and that immigrants typically are young families.

**YOUTH POPULATION BY RACE
OREGON - 1988**

	14-21 Yrs Old	% of Youth Population
Total All Races	301,195	100.0
White	273,625	90.8
Minority/Ethnic	27,570	9.2
Black	5,216	1.7
Amer. Indian	4,305	1.4
Asian	6,625	2.2
Hispanic	11,053	3.7
Other	371	0.1

Source: Business and Employment Outlook - Program Year 1988-89, Oregon Employment Division

Hispanics are by far the largest minority group in Oregon; they account for 3.7 percent of the youth population and 2.8 percent of the total population. Projections indicate that Hispanics will continue to be the largest minority group in Oregon.

The minority youth population deserves special attention because it is this group that employers will need to draw from to alleviate the labor shortages. Minorities have been ill-served in the past, but this practice will not likely continue. Society can no longer afford to ignore the minority populations.

YOUTH POPULATION ESTIMATES BY COUNTY AND AGE, 1988

	15-19	20-24	Total		15-19	20-24	Total
State	196,610	199,752	396,362				
Baker	1,092	1,128	2,220	Lake	541	527	1,068
Benton	7,738	11,827	19,565	Lane	21,384	25,895	47,279
Clackamas	21,878	20,199	42,077	Lincoln	2,267	2,375	4,642
Clatsop	2,189	2,240	4,429	Linn	6,797	6,453	13,250
Columbia	3,220	2,814	6,034	Malheur	1,989	1,988	3,977
Coos	4,267	4,067	8,334	Marion	14,831	14,723	29,554
Crook	1,012	923	1,935	Morrow	625	590	1,215
Curry	1,077	1,317	2,394	Multnomah	32,168	32,859	65,027
Deschutes	5,184	4,558	9,742	Polk	3,432	3,361	6,793
Douglas	7,125	6,845	13,970	Sherman	141	157	298
Gilliam	106	143	249	Tillamook	1,378	1,426	2,804
Grant	627	588	1,215	Umatilla	4,157	3,881	8,038
Harney	625	504	1,129	Union	1,786	1,603	3,389
Hood River	1,158	1,080	2,238	Wallowa	476	521	997
Jackson	10,370	9,929	20,299	Wasco	1,525	1,432	2,957
Jefferson	921	891	1,812	Washington	21,102	19,814	40,916
Josephine	4,448	4,678	9,126	Wheeler	108	113	221
Klamath	4,473	4,144	8,617	Yamhill	4,393	4,159	8,552

Source: Center for Population Research and Census, PSU

FAMILY STRUCTURE, INCOME AND POVERTY

A stable, nurturing environment is one of the most fundamental needs of a child. Yet the structure of the American family is changing in such a manner that it deprives children of exactly that. Preparation for entry into the labor force begins at home and at a very young age. For some people, even the circumstances surrounding their birth were determinants of future success or failure. Growing up in an insecure family environment or in poverty are social problems that can double as economic problems once the person is old enough to work.

Traditional Family Disappearing

Possibly one of the most astonishing statistics is the declining number of America's traditional married-couple families. Whereas the total number of families in the United States has increased between 1980 and 1988, the number of two-parent families with children has actually fallen by 1.4 percent.

Each year thousands of children in Oregon have to deal with the trauma of divorce. In 1986, over 13,000 children were affected by a divorce. Oregon has higher divorce rates and lower marriage rates than the United States. Although the divorce rate in Oregon has not been steadily increasing, the sheer number of divorces that occur each year is staggering. For every 100 marriages, there were 70 divorces in 1987.

Single-parent families are climbing in number, slowly replacing the traditional family. Single-parent families are much more likely to be headed by a female than a male. For Oregon, in 1980, 83 percent of single-parent families were headed by a female. In 1980, 19 percent of families with children were headed by a single parent. Assuming the same rate of change occurred in Oregon that did in the United States, nearly 22 percent the families in 1987 were single-parent families.

Nearly 24 percent of all U.S. children under the age of 18 lived with one parent in 1987, up from 20 percent in 1980. Recent data for Oregon are not available; however, compared to the United States in 1980, Oregon had a higher portion (22 percent) of children living with a single parent.

Out-Of-Wedlock Births Boom

The trend of births to unwed mothers has skyrocketed, growing at an exponential rate. In 1987, 22 percent of all births were to unwed mothers. Just ten years previously, the rate was only 12 percent.

There are serious economic consequences resulting from the social acceptance of out-of-wedlock births. The incidence of poverty is five times greater for children in single, female-headed families; 55 percent of

children in such families are living in poverty compared to 11 percent for children in all other family types. Many teen mothers dropout of school when they become pregnant. Returning may be difficult since child care arrangements must be made. A few schools are now offering child care services for their students. For those young mothers that do not receive a diploma, it is unlikely that they will find a family wage job. Thousands of teen mothers turn to social agencies for assistance. More than half of the AFDC cases involve a woman that is, or was at some time, a teen mother.

Dual-Income Families Now The Norm

The traditional family in which the husband is employed while the wife stays at home to care for the children is being replaced by dual-income families. Of all married-couple families in 1987, 60 percent were dual-income. Only 28 percent of all married-couple families were 'traditional' families. In 1976, that figure was 43 percent.

Growing Presence Of Women In The Labor Force

The single most significant trend in the labor market has been the growing participation of females. In the past 40 years, women of prime working age (25-54) have increased their labor force participation rate from 30 to 70%. Projections indicate that the rate will continue to increase, closing the gap between male and female participation rates. Women will make up 63 percent of all new labor market entrants in the year 2000.

Women in their prime childbearing ages had the most dramatic participation rate increases. Basically, having children has little or no effect on labor force participation rates today. Women age 25-34 have a participation rate of 72 percent, and more than half of the women with children under the age of 3 are in the labor force.

One group of women that have fairly low labor force participation rates are single women who maintain families with children. Their participation rate is only 55 percent. These single women, not to be confused with divorced, separated or widowed women, are stereotyped as welfare mothers. Many of them have less than a high school education and cannot find a job that pays a wage capable of supporting their family. Child care costs consume a large portion of a paycheck, making work unaffordable for many mothers.

Women are commonly thought to be part-time workers. However, the data reveal that this is a misconception. Seventy-five percent of employed women work full time, and 57 percent work year-round.

Representation of women and men in the labor force is nearing equality. Yet women are still the low income workers. In Oregon, their wages in 1986 were only 70 percent of male wages. Women account for 45 percent of all persons employed in Oregon, yet they are 65 percent of all minimum wage workers.

Social And Economic Factors Behind Change

The rise in the number of dual-employed families and the increasing labor force participation rate for females are results of changing social and economic factors. Social factors such as decreasing size of households, low fertility rates, increasing number of single-parent families, and the high

divorce-to-marriage ratio all have played a role in increasing the presence of females in the labor force.

The major economic factor leading to the increase of dual-employed couples has been the declining purchasing power of wage income. Oregon's average annual payroll, when adjusted for inflation, is lower today than it was in the late 1970s. Both spouses of a married-couple are finding it necessary to be employed in order to raise or simply maintain their standard of living.

Income Varies With Family Type

Median family income differs greatly depending on the family structure. Not surprisingly, the median income for a family with a female householder is only 42 percent of the married-couple family income and 59 percent of the male householder family income.

Looking only at the families in which the householder works full-time and year-round gives a more balanced picture. Median family income for female householders that work full-time and year-round is significantly greater than the income for all female householders. The increase for married-couple families and for male householder families is not nearly as dramatic. This indicates that a greater portion of female householders work part-time or for shorter durations throughout the year. This is quite significant considering 21 percent of all children live with a single female.

An appreciable income gap still exists between male and female householders that work full-time and year-round. The income for these female householders is only two-thirds of their male counterparts' income. The lower income of females is most likely explained by a difference in occupations; females are predominately employed in low paying service, sales and clerical occupations.

Purchasing Power Declines

A paycheck does not buy as much today as it did in the past. The median income level for a 4-person family in Oregon increased in all but one year between 1974 and 1986. However, when the income is adjusted to

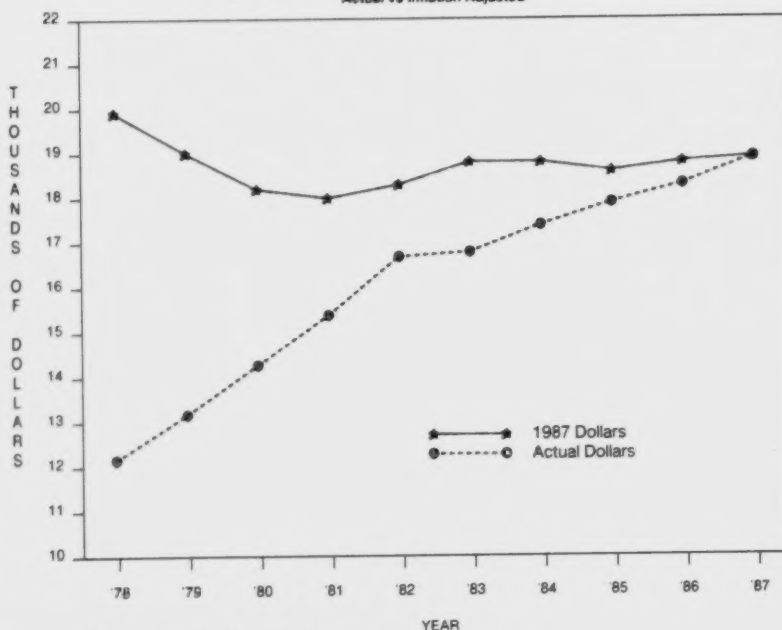
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME UNITED STATES - 1987

	All Families	Householder Full-Time, Year-Round Workers
Married-Couple	\$34,700	\$40,023
Male Householder- No Wife Present	24,804	31,629
Female Householder- No Husband Present	14,620	21,958

Source: Bureau of the Census

AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARY — OREGON, 1978 - 87

Actual vs Inflation Adjusted



Source: Oregon Employment Division

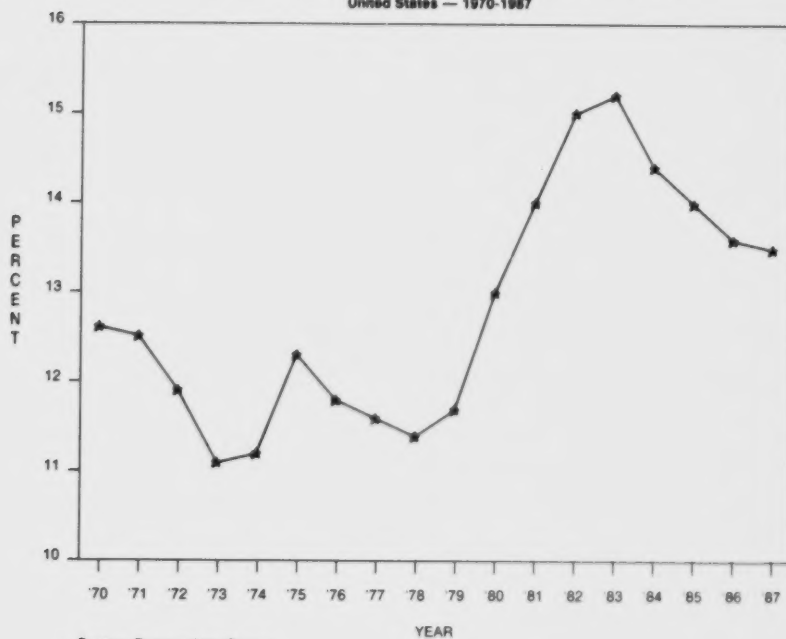
reflect average consumer price increases, the level of income in 1986 was \$3,336 less than the level in 1977. In other words, the purchasing power has decreased by more than \$3,000.

Children Have Highest Poverty Rate

Children, the most innocent victims of poverty, undoubtedly have the highest poverty rates of any age group. Nationally, children under the age of 18 had a poverty rate of 20 percent in 1987; they accounted for 38 percent of all persons below the poverty level. Their poverty rate jumps to 55 percent if they are children in a female headed family. Poverty rates are also significantly higher for minorities.

Oregon poverty data is not collected and reported as often as national data. However, for the years in which both state and national data were available, Oregon had lower rates than the nation. In 1979, the state's rate was 10.7 percent, compared to 11.7 nationally. Based on information gathered by the decennial census, 10.7 percent of Oregon's population had incomes in 1979 below the poverty level; the rate nationally was 12.4 percent. When data for 1984-86 was averaged, Oregon's poverty rate was 12.6 percent, and the nation's rate was 14 percent.

PERCENT OF PERSONS BELOW POVERTY LEVEL
United States — 1970-1987



Estimates for the number of economically disadvantaged persons provide a broader measure of the poverty problem. Data for 1988 indicated that nearly 540,000 persons in Oregon were economically disadvantaged, of which, 26 percent were under the age of 14, and 14 percent were in the 14-21 age group. These two groups combined have an economically disadvantaged rate of 25 percent.

The increasing poverty rate can be linked to a variety of factors. Spending on social programs has dropped throughout the 1980s. Income adjusted for inflation has slipped, reducing the purchasing power of a paycheck. The surge in the number of single-parent families, especially those headed by females, has also contributed to higher poverty levels.

EDUCATION

If Oregon is going to remain competitive in the global economy, efforts must be devoted to increasing the educational attainment of all persons in the state. The necessary resources must be dedicated to reaching this goal or the standard of living in Oregon will continue to decline relative to the U.S. as a whole. A major reason why present levels of education will not be sufficient in the future is the shifting occupational skills mix in the economy. The shift has been and will continue to be toward professional and technical occupations which require higher level skills. Already there have been large declines in the number of production, construction, operatives and maintenance jobs, and many of the non-professional technical jobs no longer pay a living wage. People with limited education are faced with reduced job opportunities and low wages. Without having at least some post-secondary training, occupational mobility becomes very restricted. People that are functionally illiterate or lacking basic skills are simply not competitive in today's labor market even if they are searching for a non-technical position.

Educational Attainment Rising

Clearly, each generation has historically obtained a higher level of education than the previous generation. The percentage of persons age 25 or older who have completed at least four years of high school has doubled in the past 40 years, and the percentage of those completing at least four years of college has tripled. Based on national trends, it is estimated that one out of five Oregonians age 25 or older in 1987 had at least four years of college education. Oregon has consistently had higher levels of education than the United States.

The median years of school completed has been steadily increasing over the past 40 years. What is disturbing about this trend is that the rate of increase has slowed drastically. Between 1940 and 1950, the median years of school completed increased 20 percent. But between 1970 and 1980, the increase was only 3 percent.

A decline in the educational attainment level may be the future trend due to the relative cutbacks in spending on education. Nationally, spending per student between 1959 and 1971 grew 4.7 percent per year, after adjusting

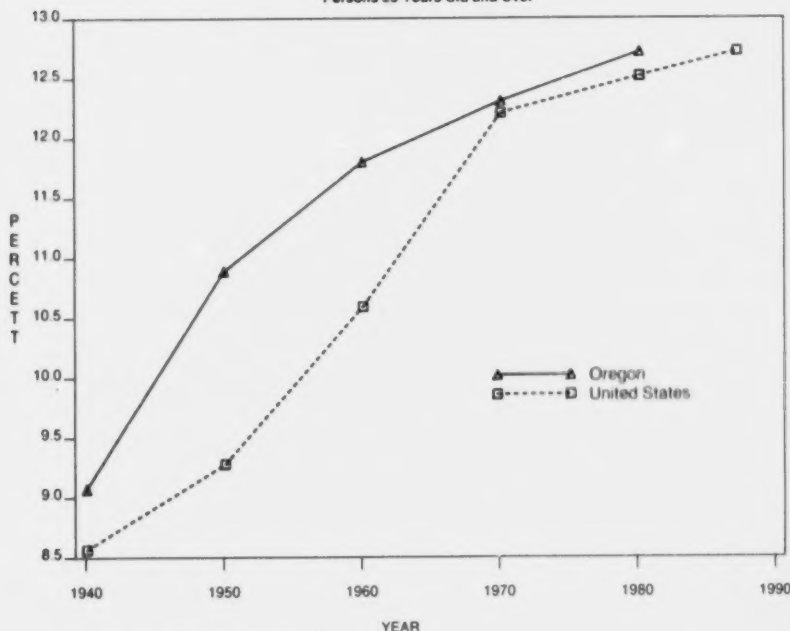
EDUCATION COMPLETION RATES^{1/}

	4 or More Yrs. of H.S.		4 or More Yrs. of College	
	Oregon	US	Oregon	US
1940	32.7	24.5	5.4	4.6
1950	42.1	34.3	6.6	6.2
1960	48.4	43.7	8.5	8.1
1970	60.0	55.2	11.8	11.0
1980	75.6	68.6	17.9	17.0
1987	NA	75.6	NA	19.9

^{1/}Persons 25 years old and over.

Source: Bureau of the Census

MEDIAN YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED
Persons 25 Years Old and Over



Source: US Bureau of the Census

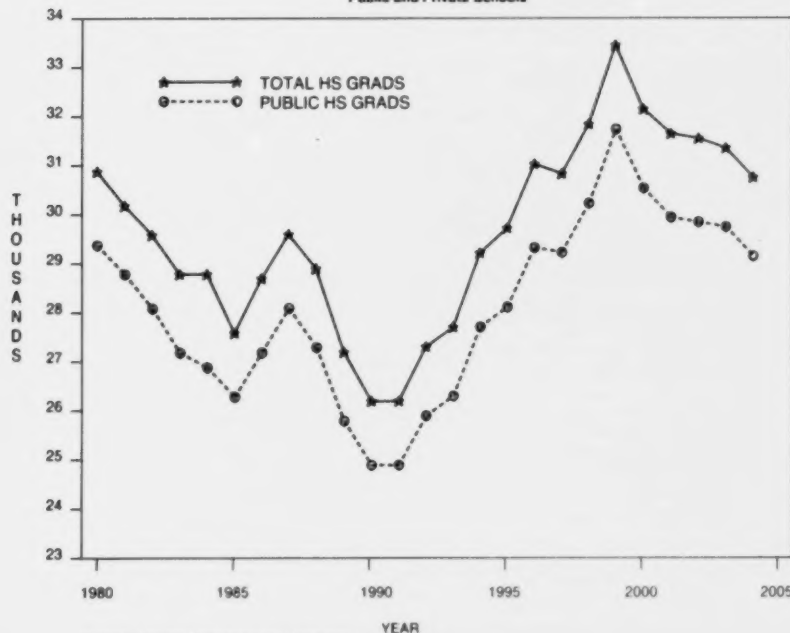
for inflation. This rate was slightly higher than the rate of expenditures on plant and equipment, and a full percentage point higher than gross national product growth. However, the following fifteen years saw a slow down; spending on education increased at an annual rate of only 2.7 percent (inflation adjusted), the same rate as GNP growth. Investments made on capital (4.2 percent annual increase) grew faster than investments in human capital.

In 1980, half of Oregon's population had at most only 12.7 years of education. The economy in the past may have tolerated this level, but technological advances have changed the occupational structure of the workforce. The professional and technical occupations are growing rapidly, while craft workers, operatives and laborers are less in demand. By the year 2000, the major-

ity of all new jobs will require more than a high school level of education.

Enrollment Levels Fall In Elementary & Secondary Schools

OREGON HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES
Public and Private Schools



Source: Oregon Department of Education

After the baby boom generation completed high school, enrollment levels began to fall. In 1970, 469,000 students (average daily membership) were in Oregon public schools. Enrollment dropped to 428,000 in 1985, and rose slightly to 434,000 in 1987. Relatively slow growth is expected through the 1990s as long as moderate net migration occurs in Oregon.

The trend in private school enrollment has been quite the opposite. Enrollment began growing in the mid-1970s at a time when public school enrollment was declining. However, the increased private enrollment was not large enough to cause total school enrollment to increase. Estimated enrollment in 1987 was 37,800. This was the first significant decline since the mid-1970s.

Although total enrollment trends

are a labor market concern in the long run, employers are immediately affected by the size of the graduating class. Since only half of high school graduates enter college or a training program the fall following graduation, the size of the entry level workforce is directly influenced by the number of graduates. The number of public and private high school graduates had been steadily declining from at least 1970 until 1986. Projections indicate that the smallest graduating class will be the 1990-91 class. After that, the number of graduates is expected to increase at a steady and rapid rate until the year 2000.

Number of Minority Students Increases

Minority student enrollment in Oregon public schools has been increasing since at least 1975, while enrollment of white students dropped consistently. The Hispanic student population has doubled in twelve years while Asian/Pacific Islander/Indo-Chinese enrollment has increased four-fold. A culturally diverse class has special curriculum needs. For example, students with different racial or cultural backgrounds may use English as a second language. Teachers will need to spend a greater amount of time teaching basic communication skills to these students.

OREGON PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY RACE

	1976	1979	1982	1985	1988
White	443,447	430,256	406,441	403,629	414,495
Hispanic	8,832	10,748	11,675	13,424	16,516
Black	9,466	10,020	10,047	10,190	11,107
American Indian	6,705	7,311	7,385	7,484	7,414
Asian/PI/Indo-Chinese	1,478	3,882	7,993	6,391	5,869
Russian	689	861	954	941	NA
Other	4,090	4,050	3,689	5,468	6,351
Total	474,707	467,128	448,184	447,527	461,752

Source: Oregon Department of Education

Dropout Rate Unacceptably High

Even though the educational attainment level has been increasing, Oregon still has a serious dropout problem. Only 71 percent of the freshmen in 1983 graduated with their class four years later; this translates into a dropout rate of 29 percent. After adjusting for the young people that receive a GED (General Education Diploma) certificate before the age of 19 and the students that receive a certificate of completion or another document similar to a diploma, the dropout rate is estimated to be 25 percent.

Whether or not this dropout rate of 25 percent is higher or lower than in the past should not be the major point of contention. What matters is that the labor market cannot tolerate the high number of entry level workers who lack basic skills, especially at the same time the actual size of the young, entry level workforce is shrinking.

Dropouts See Need For Education

A survey was conducted in Oregon to determine the status of those students that did not graduate with their class in 1985. Their employment history indicated short durations of employment. At the time of the survey, just over half were employed. Employment in the food and beverage occupations was reported by the leavers more often than any other occupation. Only 20 percent reported having wage or salary income, while 26 percent reported income from welfare or social service agencies.

The majority of high school leavers recognized the need to have additional schooling or training. Obtaining a GED was the goal for nearly half of the leavers, while another 10 percent were pursuing some other educational program.

Majority of H.S. Grads Go To College

Even with a high school diploma in hand, graduates recognize the need for higher education. Greater employment security and higher income are two benefits that typically come with a college education. Not only is the

U.S. MEDIAN ANNUAL INCOME OF YEAR-ROUND FULL-TIME WORKERS 25 YEARS AND OVER - 1987

Years of School Completed	Male	Female
High School		
1-3 Years	\$21,269	\$12,940
4 Years	25,394	16,461
College		
4 Years	35,244	23,406

Source: Bureau of the Census

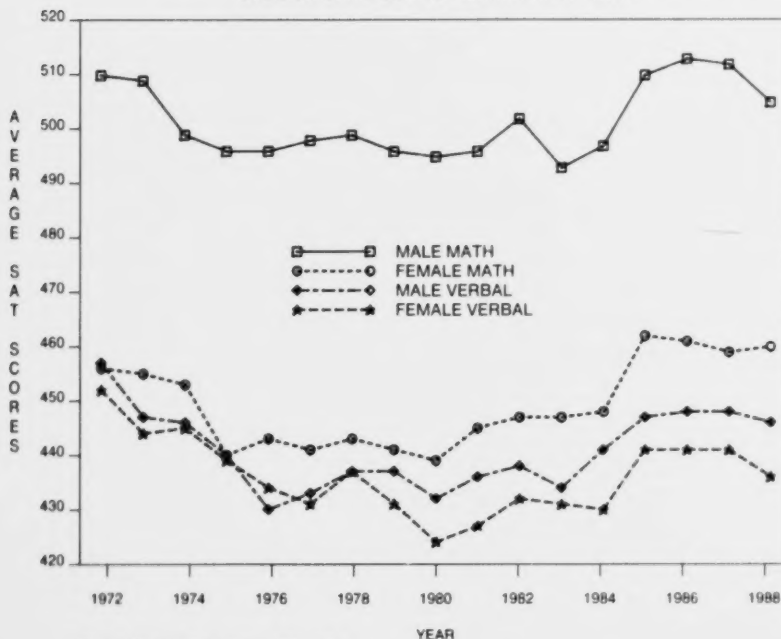
unemployment rate of the college educated labor force nearly three times lower than the rate for the high school educated, but the college educated are less likely to be laid off during a business cycle downturn. Income for males with four years of college education is 39 percent higher than income for male high school graduates. The gap for females, 42 percent, is even larger.

The class of 1987 had 53 percent of its graduates admitted by universities, colleges and vocational schools the fall following graduation. Forty-one percent of the graduates chose Oregon as their place of study, while 12 percent went out of state. The percentage of graduates being admitted into Oregon schools has been increasing over the past five years. The percentage of graduates enrolled for higher education differs greatly by

county. Sherman county had the lowest percentage (23 percent) compared to Benton county which had the highest percentage (47).

Scores from the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) are by no means the only source for measuring student performance since the majority of test takers are college bound seniors. However, SAT scores are standardized and readily available. The most significant and longstanding trend has been the considerable gap in math scores that exists between males and females. It is generally believed that females do not receive enough encouragement to take science and math courses, a result of sexual stereotyping. The changing economy has increased the demand for workers with math and science skills. Women with such skills are in strong demand, yet the traditional sexual stereotypes have

OREGON SAT SCORES - MATH and VERBAL



Source: Oregon Department of Education

not changed to reflect this. A greater portion of women are entering non-traditional occupations, but there is a long way to go.

Higher Education Enrollment Grew With Baby Boomers

Enrollment in Oregon's higher education institutions grew swiftly as the first of the baby boom generation entered their 20s in 1965. This generation was the first to grow up in an affluent society; they had increased opportunities to continue their education beyond high school since financial assistance was relatively easier to obtain than it is today. Enrollment began dropping after 1980. The drop was largely a result of the smaller youth population and the economic downturn.

Enrollment is projected to increase over the next several years in Oregon colleges and universities. Since the projected number of high school graduates is falling, higher education institutions will need to increase their recruiting efforts and target the older population groups.

FTE ENROLLMENT IN OREGON COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

	Actual 1986-87	Est. 1987-88	Proj. 1988-89	Proj. 1989-90	Proj. 1990-91
State College & Universities	53,143	53,878	54,918	55,385	55,611
Community Colleges	49,214	49,776	50,827	51,922	52,895
Independent Colleges	15,864	16,727	17,381	17,704	17,347
Total	118,221	120,381	123,126	125,011	125,853

Source: Oregon Department of Education; Oregon Offices of Community Colleges, Office of Educational Policy & Planning

College Student Stereotype No Longer Accurate

Two new trends in enrollment patterns have recently changed the stereotype of college students. A student today is more likely to attend college on a part-time basis and is more likely to be over the age of 24.

Part-time enrollment picked up after experiencing a large dip in the early 1980s. Ever since 1977, the number of part-time students has outnumbered full-time enrollees. In 1986, 56 percent of Oregon college students were attending part-time, up from 36 percent in 1970.

The other significant trend has been the increasing age of college students. In 1970, half of the college students were 18-21 years old. By 1987, less than one third were in that age category. Today, the majority (56%) of students are 25 years old or older.

The changing characteristics of the college student population are another sign of changing skills in the workplace. Automation has eliminated some jobs, created many new jobs and transformed the skills needed for nearly every job. Thousands of workers have suddenly found their skills are antiquated. Going back to school for re-training is necessary if workers want to remain competitive.

Minority Degree Data Misleading

Oregon colleges and universities awarded over 21,000 degrees and certificates in the 1986-87 school year. The percentage of degrees and certificates awarded to minorities appears at first glance to be an optimistic figure, but is not so after taking a closer look. Of all certificates and degrees granted, seven percent were to minorities. However, minorities were more likely to be studying in programs lasting two or fewer years rather than four year (or more) degree programs. Minorities were awarded 7.7 percent of all certificates and associate degrees, but only 6.7 percent of degrees

**DEGREES AWARDED TO MINORITIES
1986-87**

	Degrees	% of Total	Population Age 16-54	% of Pop. Age 16-54
Asian/Pac. Island	836	3.9	32,947	2.2
Hispanic	297	1.4	42,759	2.8
Black	211	1.0	21,864	1.5
American Indian	178	0.8	16,652	1.1
Total	1,522	7.0	114,219	7.6

Source: Office of Educational Policy and Planning

requiring at least four years of study.

The percentage of degrees earned by minorities is misleading in another sense when detailed race data are examined. It appears that the minority share of degrees (7%) was only slightly less than their share of the population age 16-54 (7.6%). The Asian and Pacific Island races have earned a disproportionately high share of degrees relative to their representation in the population. This masks the low college participation of the Black, Hispanic and American Indian populations.

EMPLOYMENT

Oregon employers are already dealing with a shortage of skilled labor force entrants due primarily to the declining number of young people in the population. The situation is certainly going to get worse before population demographics change, reversing the labor shortage. As stated earlier in this report, young people today have increased opportunities in the job market. Fewer youth and an aging workforce have led to an abundance of entry level positions. However, the labor shortage does not guarantee employment to the unskilled, illiterate job seekers. The challenge lies in increasing the skills of all labor force participants, especially those groups of people who in the past have not been competitive in the labor market.

Smaller Youth Labor Force Commands Change

Oregon had more than 100,000 young people (16-19 years old) in the labor force during 1988. The number and relative size of the youth workforce has diminished greatly since the 1970s. This explains in part why employers are hard pressed when trying to fill positions typically held by youth. The youth labor force was as large as 120,000 less than 10 years ago. In 1988, only 7.3 percent of the labor force was made up of 16-19 year olds. In the 1970s, the figure was as high as 10.5 percent.

If only full-time workers were being considered, the percentage of the workforce that are youth would of course be much lower. Nationally, the majority (65%) of young workers are employed on a part-time basis; 83 percent of those by choice. The respective figure for adults is only 11 percent. Students typically need a work schedule that conforms to their inflexible school hours and flexible, but ever changing, after-school hours. Many industries are simply unable to customize such a work schedule to meet the needs of a young worker.

OREGON YOUTH CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE
SELECTED YEARS

	Number	% of Work force Age 16-19
1975	109,000	10.5
1979	120,000	8.5
1983	89,000	6.7
1987	101,000	7.3

Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Youth Unemployment Remains High During Labor Shortage

The 1987 unemployment rate for Oregonians age 16-19 (16.9%) was nearly three times the rate for the adult population. Reasons for unemployment vary greatly for different age groups. The majority of young people report that being a new entrant in the labor force is the reason they are unemployed. In the adult population, the majority of the unemployed are

people who have lost their jobs. New entrants often lack job search and occupational skills. Employers are finding that many of the young entrants are also deficient in basic skills. These appear to be the most significant obstacles for young people seeking employment.

Although the unemployment rate of 16.9 percent for young people in Oregon seems high, it is dreadfully high for young minorities. Due to

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATES OREGON - 1987

Total	16.9%
White, Not Hispanic	16.6
Black	27.0
American Indian	26.4
Asian/Pacific Island	11.1
Hispanic Origin	17.5

Source: Oregon Employment Division.

numerous social factors, minorities are often unprepared for entry into the labor market. The situation is quite serious considering projections indicate that 43 percent of the new entrants into the labor force between 1985 and 2000 will be minorities or immigrants. These are the groups that have been ill-served by society, and now they are expected to ease the economy out of severe labor shortages.

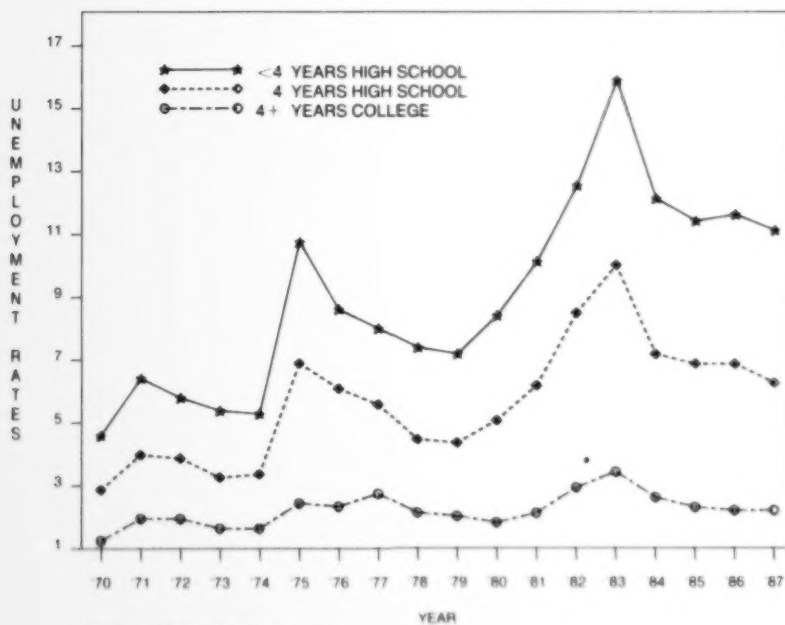
More Time in College, Less Time in Unemployment

High unemployment rates go hand in hand with low levels of education. High school dropouts have an unemployment rate that is nearly five times greater than the rate for college graduates. The lower educated also suffer more during times of recession. This is because a large percentage of the

college educated are employed in industries that are less susceptible to business cycle fluctuations such as professional service industry where 42 percent of all college graduates are employed. Only 15 percent of high school graduates are working in this industry. On the other hand, the goods producing industries are very sensitive to business cycle downturns. Only 18 percent of college educated people work in these industries, compared to 30 percent of high school graduates.

A tremendous social cost is incurred when students drop out of the educational system. Even in times of labor shortages, it is unlikely that all high school dropouts seeking employment will find it. Although some businesses can offer training to employees who are lacking literacy or other basic skills, not all businesses, especially small ones, will be able to provide this.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY EDUCATION LEVEL
United States — Workers 25-64 Years Old



Manufacturing Employment Diminishes

One of the most significant labor trends has been the decline of

manufacturing employment. Higher productivity due to a more educated workforce and advanced technologies have reduced the labor needed to produce the same or a higher quantity of output. Manufacturing employment has also been reduced by the evolution of the global market economy; labor-intensive manufacturing processes are transferred to countries that have lower labor costs. The strength of the dollar has also encouraged purchases of imported goods.

Although manufacturing employment dropped (-6.2%) between 1979 and 1988, employment growth in nonmanufacturing industries was strong enough (13.3%) to cover the decline. The shift from manufacturing to nonmanufacturing has serious economic implications. Overall, wages are lower, and full-time employment is less likely in nonmanufacturing industries. The average annual payroll of people working in Oregon's nonmanufacturing industries during 1987 was \$16,700, compared to \$24,100 in the manufacturing industries. Lower wages in nonmanufacturing may be attributed to a number of factors, such as a higher portion of part-time employment and less union representation. Nationally, only 5.6 percent of manufacturing employees work part-time, whereas 21.1 percent of nonmanufacturing employees do.

Blue Collar Jobs Lose Big

The loss of manufacturing employment meant that thousands of low skilled but highly paid workers were forced into unemployment. Between 1979 and 1986, employment of craft workers, operatives and laborers plummeted by 60,000. During the same time period, employment in the professional and technical occupations grew by 57,000. Unfortunately, few of the laborers, craft and operative workers possessed the skills necessary to transfer into professional and technical occupations. High school dropouts and even graduates will find that job opportunities for the unskilled are quite scarce. Projections to the year 2000 indicate that the share of unskilled jobs will be declining even further.

Youth Still Seek Blue Collar Jobs

Fourteen thousand young applicants (age 0-21) registered with the Oregon Employment Division were seeking work in the production, construction, operative and maintenance occupations (June 1987 to July 1988). These are the very occupations that are diminishing in relative and in some cases absolute size. Granted, nearly all professional and technical

NONAGRICULTURAL WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT SELECTED YEARS

	1979	1982	1988
Total	1,056,200	960,800	1,152,300
Manufacturing	228,500	185,700	214,300
Nonmanufacturing	827,700	775,100	938,000

Source: Oregon Employment Division

OREGON'S SHIFTING OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE^{1/}

	1979	1986	Net Change	% Change
Managers & Administrators	89,100	76,842	-12,258	-13.8
Professional & Technical	154,410	211,674	57,264	37.1
Sales & Related Workers	77,530	95,616	18,086	23.3
Clerical	210,300	214,694	4,394	2.1
Service Workers	167,280	164,374	-2,906	-1.7
Craft Workers	129,470	109,824	-19,646	-15.2
Operatives	150,430	128,533	-21,897	-14.6
Laborers	76,890	58,584	-18,306	-23.8
Total	1,055,410	1,060,141	4,731	0.4

1/ Nonagricultural wage and salary employment.

Source: Oregon Employment Division

occupations require a two or a four year degree, and few people finish their higher education studies before the age of 22. However, it is apparent that high school graduates still expect to work in high paying, manufacturing and construction jobs like their parents did. Given the changing workplace, this expectation is not likely to be fulfilled.

Young Workers Face Structural Unemployment

When workers do not have the skills that are needed in the workplace, structural unemployment results. Structural unemployment is probably the most serious type of unemployment, since there is no quick or easy remedy to the problem. Thousands of workers have found that their skills are no longer valuable in the workplace. These workers, usually displaced by technology or international competition, realize that re-training is necessary if they are to remain competitive labor force participants. This explains the surge in the number of part-time and older students in Oregon's community colleges, universities and vocational schools.

It is expected to some degree that the older workforce would eventually have outdated job skills. What is most disturbing is that young workers are entering the labor force with mismatched skills or no skills at all. The high unemployment rate of 16-19 year olds during a labor shortage indicates that youth lack the skills necessary for entry level positions. Compounding the problem is that many young people have unrealistic job expectations. Knowledge of the current industry and occupational trends, even if at a basic level, is becoming necessary if youth are to make successful career decisions.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Before becoming an adult, one must pass through some rather turbulent adolescent years. Every generation has experienced it. But young people today are growing up in a society vastly different than that of their parents and grandparents. The major social issues involving youth such as drug use, crime, teen pregnancy, suicide and child abuse are sensational in nature. The issues are constantly reported and often times exaggerated by the media. A teenager affected by any one of these social problems may experience the negative repercussions for the rest of his/her life. The teenager actually becomes a social problem when involved in drugs, crime, child abuse, or early parenthood. The challenge lies in helping youth become a resource, not a problem.

Teenage Drug Use in Oregon Greater Than Nation

Drug use among teenagers seems to be foremost in the minds of parents, teachers and employers. A multitude of other social and health problems are associated with drug use. Although a direct causal relationship cannot be proven, the consensus seems to suggest that drug use is the root of problems such as crime, school failure, unwanted pregnancy, poor health, AIDS and unemployment.

A survey was conducted in 1988 of Oregon's 8th and 11th graders to determine the magnitude of the drug problem. Probably the most disheartening statistic to come out of the survey is that Oregon's eleventh graders have a more serious drug problem than do high school seniors nationally. Oregon juniors are using drugs more frequently and at an earlier age than high school seniors nationally. Another very disturbing trend is the increasing percentage of eighth graders who report having used drugs sometime in their lifetime. The major conclusion to be drawn from the study is the need to intensify the efforts education, prevention, and intervention at earlier grade levels.

The Federal Government has made the war against drugs a national priority. In the past seven years the amount of money spent of drug enforcement has tripled. The government primarily attacks the supply side,

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS THAT REPORT
USING DRUGS ON A MONTHLY BASIS

	Oregon Eleventh Grade	U.S. Twelfth Grade	Oregon Eighth Grade
Marijuana	26.6	21.0	12.6
Cocaine	6.4	4.3	3.6
Amphetamines	5.4	5.2	4.8
Inhalants	5.9	3.5	11.3
LSD	5.6	1.8	3.8
Barbiturates	3.8	1.4	3.7
Cigarettes	40.2	29.4	34.0
Alcohol	58.3	66.4	36.6

Source: Office of the Director, Oregon Department
of Human Resources

the traffickers and dealers. However, not until the demand for drugs is reduced will the problem diminish. Schools, homes, and neighborhoods are the crucial places where the war against drugs must be waged.

30,000 Juvenile Arrests Made in 1987

Oregon and particularly the Portland metropolitan area have recently gained national attention for their high crime rates. Persons working with juvenile offenders are searching for more effective ways of reducing and preventing juvenile delinquency. The objective is to significantly reduce the

SELECTED CRIME STATISTICS FOR JUVENILES OREGON - 1987

	Juvenile Arrests	% of All Arrests
Total	30,087	23.7
Burglary	2,335	40.6
Motor Vehicle Theft	1,015	38.6
Larceny (theft)	8,210	34.3
Robbery	229	17.3
Forcible Rape	65	17.6

Source: Juvenile Services Commission

number of youth who eventually enter the adult correction system. Given that the adult system is already overcrowded, this challenge must be met.

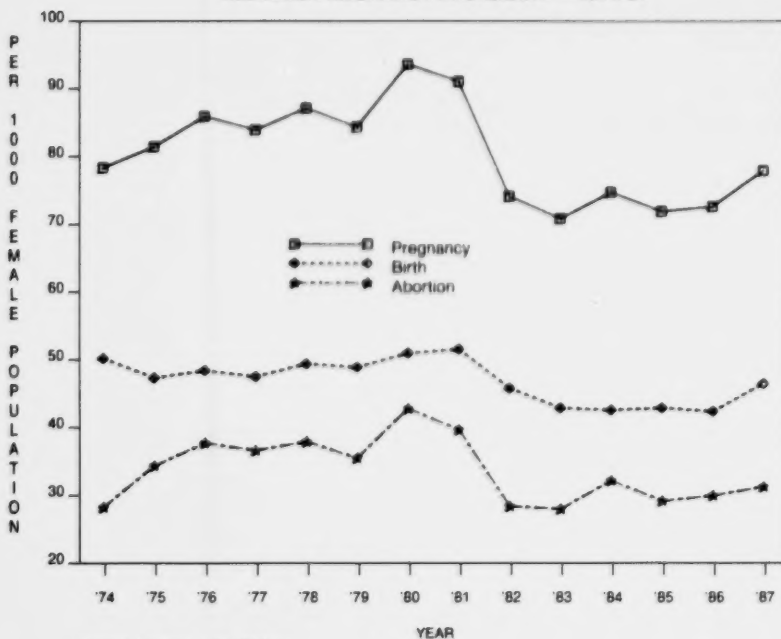
Juveniles accounted for 23.7 percent of all arrests for crimes against persons and property, and behavioral crimes. The percentage was much greater for larceny, motor vehicle theft and burglary. The statistics underestimate the magnitude of the problem since data are only available

for crimes resulting in arrests. The actual number and ratio of adults and juveniles involved in crimes are not known. Law enforcement officials estimate that over half of all crimes like burglary and larceny are committed by juveniles.

The link between drug use and crime appears obvious given the fact the 64 percent of the youth who entered MacLaren School for Boys during the

last six months of 1987 were assessed as being chemically dependent. It is estimated that at any given time, 90 percent of this school's population needs drug and alcohol education or treatment.

TEENAGE PREGNANCY IN OREGON — 1974-87



Source: Oregon Health Division

7,000 Teens Pregnant in 1987

Teenage pregnancy has a number of negative health, social and economic consequences. Some are immediate, such as complications during pregnancy and labor. Other consequences are long run, affecting more than one generation, such as poverty. The situation in Oregon obviously deserves attention considering one out of 13 teenagers age 15-19 became pregnant, and one out of 22 gave birth in 1987.

Despite the fact that the teenage pregnancy rate is declining, over 7000 Oregon teens became pregnant

in 1987. More than 4000 of them gave birth; nearly 3000 had induced abortions. Nine hundred (21%) of the teens giving birth in 1987 already had children. For 18 of the teens, it was their fourth child.

Teenage mothers are more likely to receive inadequate prenatal care and have low birth weight infants. Of the teens giving birth in 1987, 18.4 percent did not receive adequate prenatal care and 6.5 percent had low birth weight infants, compared to 7.3 and 5.2 percent, respectively, for mothers age 20 or older.

Half of all teenagers who have a child before the age of 18 do not finish high school and are likely to be either unemployed or hold low paying jobs. At some point in their lives, 60 percent of teen mothers will receive welfare assistance. Based on a sample drawn from active AFDC cases as of September 30, 1986, 4.2 percent were teenage mothers. More importantly, 49 percent were or had been at some time a teenage mother. The average cash payment for an ADC case is estimated to average 16% more for the teenage mothers than for those who first became mothers at age 20 or older. A very high percentage (44%) of Children Services Division cases served between December 1986 and November 1987 involved mothers who were at some time a teen parent. More than 1000 children served had mothers under the age of 20.

Child Abuse Victim Rate Increasing

Each year thousands of young Oregonians are subjected to child abuse in forms such as neglect, physical and sexual abuse, mental injury, and threat of harm. Children who endure abuse are likely to be disadvantaged emotionally and physically, impairing their success in school and social situations. As just one example, approximately 90 percent of the girls in the Juvenile Corrections' Hillcrest School during 1987 reported being sexually abused at some time prior to their commitment to the training school.

Children Services Division (CSD) investigated 20,526 child abuse and neglect reports in 1987, an increase of 93 percent from the number in 1981. They identified 11,877 child abuse victims in 1987 and 15,291 incidents of child abuse. For 22 young people, child abuse ended their lives. The numbers of victims, incidents and fatalities in 1987 were the highest recorded in the past seven years.

INCIDENTS OF CHILD ABUSE BY TYPE

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Total	11595	12299	14018	14023	12768	13350	15291
Physical Abuse	2275	2409	2873	3177	3060	3240	3374
Mental Injury	NA	NA	NA	793	860	892	1317
Neglect	5162	5127	5722	6103	4476	5118	5649
Sexual Abuse & Exploitation	1697	2286	2956	3947	4364	4082	3909
Fatality	NA	5	4	3	8	18	22
Other	2461	2472	2463	NA	NA	NA	NA
Threat of Harm	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1020

Source: Children Services Division

Not only are the actual numbers growing, but the victim rate is also on the rise, indicating that the number of victims is increasing faster than population. There were 17.3 child abuse victims per 1000 children in 1987. Rates vary greatly by county and region within Oregon. Morrow and Crook counties had the highest victim rates, 49.2 and 40.3 respectively. Polk and Washington counties were found to have the lowest rates, 8.3 and 8.4 respectively.

Although there are many complex issues involved in the increase of

child abuse, the dominant problem is likely to be parental substance abuse. In 1987 suspected drug and alcohol abuse was identified by CSD case-workers as a contributing factor in 29 percent of the families with child abuse victims. Only single parent families were reported more often (42%) as contributing to child maltreatment. Moreover, since this type of information was first compiled in 1985, parental substance abuse as a contributing factor has risen 2.5 times faster than single parents. Although living in poverty has not been singled out as a factor contributing to child abuse, it is directly or indirectly related to a number of the factors. Child abuse is as much a consequence of troubled economic times as of distressed social times.

Mental Health Needs of Young Unmet

In light of the information provided about teenage drug and alcohol use, juvenile arrests, teen pregnancy and child abuse, it is not surprising that thousands of young people need some form of mental health services. The Mental Health Division (MHD) estimated that 80,995 Oregonians under the age of 18 in 1987 needed mental health services; that is 11.8% of the youth population. Nearly 19,000 of these children and adolescents have mental disorders with a serious degree of impaired social functioning, a need for services from several agencies and a formal psychiatric diagnosis. Another 2,430 have an acute impairment and may also be dangerous to themselves or others. An additional 4,050 are psychotic, have severe, persistent and pervasive impairments, and may also be dangerous to themselves or others. These three categories total 25,109 children and adolescents who are regarded as Priority One by the MHD and who are eligible for services in the community. Approximately one-third of those were served in 1987.

Motor Vehicle Accidents Claim 200 Young Lives in 1987

Death statistics, especially for different age groups, provide certain clues about lifestyle. Social problems, not medical problems, appear to be more deadly for young people (age 15-24), than for older people. The three leading causes of death for young people are unintentional injuries (includes motor vehicle accidents), suicide and homicide, whereas for all ages, the causes are heart disease, malignant neoplasms and cerebrovascular diseases such as strokes.

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH FOR PEOPLE AGE 15-24 OREGON - 1987

	Males		Females		Total No.
	No.	Rate	No.	Rate	
Total	315	155.9	91	47.2	406
Unintentional Injuries	209	103.4	44	22.8	253
Suicides	48	23.8	9	4.7	57
Homicides	15	7.4	10	5.2	25
Malignant Neoplasms	13	6.4	9	4.7	22
Undetermined Causes	10	4.9	2	1.0	12

Rates per 100,000 population.

Source: Oregon Health Division

The single most common cause of death for 15-24 year olds is motor vehicle accidents. These accidents accounted for 50 percent of all deaths and 79 percent of the deaths due to unintentional injuries during 1987. Immaturity and lack of driving experience are the most likely reasons why youth have the highest fatal motor vehicle accident rate. Alcohol is involved in an estimated 60 percent of teen traffic fatalities nationally. In

Oregon during 1987, 120 teen drivers were involved in fatal accidents, of which 38 tested positive for alcohol. These 38 accidents resulted in 40 deaths.

The fact that suicide is the second leading cause of death for 15-24 year olds comes as a surprise to many people, especially parents. Each case of suicide in a child represents an unnecessary death; an event that simply should not have occurred. Suicide statistics are on the conservative side given the fact that under-reporting is common and that many deaths ascribed to other reasons are actually suicides.

Because the most frequent methods of suicide all carry grave dangers for survivors, teenagers who have unsuccessful suicide attempts are often left with major health problems such as brain damage, broken bones, or malfunctioning internal organs as well as continuing emotional stress. The ratio of attempted to completed suicides among adolescents is estimated to be anywhere between 10 to 1 and 100 to 1. During a six month period in 1988, there were 364 reported suicide attempts in children and adolescents, an average of two per day.

IN CLOSING

A great deal of the data presented in this report indicate that youth are poorly prepared for entry into the labor force. The intention was not to dwell on the negative, but to point out the major obstacles impeding youth from successfully competing in the labor market. Whether the problems involving youth are bigger today than yesterday is somewhat irrelevant. What matters is that employers are less tolerant of problems that lower quality and productivity levels. Employers need a quality workforce behind their products and services in order to compete in today's global market.

Young people are facing a bright future of increased job opportunities that have resulted from new demographic and economic structures. But not all will benefit equally from the new opportunities; an unstable worklife is still in the future of those that have low skill or education levels. It is our hope that policy makers, educators, parents, and employers, as well as youth, will use the data in this report to prepare for the future, so that all youth will be ready to take advantage of the increased job opportunities.